

RAILROAD BRIDGE ACROSS THE TENNESSEE RIVER,
NEAR GILBERTSVILLE, KY.

MARCH 5, 1904.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BERRY, from the Committee on Commerce, submitted the
following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 4387.]

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (S. 4387) to authorize the Chicago, St. Louis and New Orleans Railroad Company to construct a bridge across the Tennessee River, near Gilbertsville, Ky., having considered the same, report it with amendments and as amended recommend its passage.

The bill thus amended has the approval of the War Department, as will appear by the annexed letter; the amendments referred to therein having been incorporated in the bill as reported.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS,
Washington, March 2, 1904.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith a letter dated the 19th ultimo, from the Senate Committee on Commerce, inclosing for the views of the War Department thereon S. 4387, Fifty-eighth Congress, second session, "A bill to authorize the Chicago, St. Louis and New Orleans Railroad Company to construct a bridge across the Tennessee River, near Gilbertsville, Ky."

It is understood that the object of the bill is to authorize the construction of a new bridge to take the place of the existing bridge owned and controlled by the Illinois Central Railroad Company. The existing bridge of the Illinois Central Railroad Company is an unreasonable obstruction to navigation, and the question of the alteration of the bridge so as to make navigation through it reasonably free, easy, and unobstructed has been under consideration by the Department for a number of years past. Plans for reconstructing the bridge on a new location, about 2,400 feet above the present one, having been presented to the Secretary of War by the Illinois Central Railroad Company, they were approved by him September 2, 1903, under authority conferred upon him by section 18 of the river and harbor act of March 3, 1899.

The bridge was originally built under authority of State law, before the enactment by Congress of the laws taking under its control the matter of the construction of bridges across navigable waters, and it is probable that the passage of the bill under consideration is desired for the purpose of giving the new bridge a better legal status.

With the above understanding, I know of no objection to the passage of the bill by Congress, so far as the interests of navigation are concerned, provided it is amended as indicated on a copy of the same herewith submitted.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. MACKENZIE,

Brig. Gen., Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army.

Hon. WILLIAM H. TAFT,
Secretary of War.

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